BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. **E(5)**

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT
MEETING DATE: September 25, 2001

TITLE: Request for Further Direction on the Paperless Strategy for the Town

DEPARTMENT: Management Services	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ____ NO _x_
ATTACHMENTS:	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: **Bing Roenigk, Andrew Vogel, 918-7305**

PURPOSE
The purpose of this item is to seek further guidance from the Board of Alderman on how the Town of Carrboro is to proceed with implementing a paperless work environment strategy. Staff hopes to identify specific *paper-bound* tasks that the Board of Aldermen deems desirable to move to a *paperless* based task. The Board is also requested to further clarify the priority of implementation of those *paperless* tasks.

INFORMATION
Staff, noting the Board's ongoing commitment to a Town wide paperless strategy, has taken general steps toward facilitating such a policy. These steps are most visibly seen in the implementation of the technical infrastructure. Currently, the Town's intranet (ELVIS – Employee Link to Valuable Information Sources) and Internet sites have lent themselves nicely to turning once traditionally paper-bound tasks into paperless tasks. Examples follow:

- BoA Agendas packets are now available on-line. A much smaller number of paper based agenda packets are being produced and distributed.
- BoA Minutes are available on line. The Town Clerk may now refer interested parties to the on line version instead of making them a paper based copy.
- Recreation and Parks activity calendars and cost schedules are available to citizens on line. Replacing the need for some citizens to seek printed copies.
- Personnel forms (E.G. Workers Compensation) are being placed on line. Pay Plans and Grids are available for on line viewing.
- Manuals are now on line – IT Budget Manual, Purchasing Manual and so on.
- The Town Clerk has made MANY documents pertaining to the various Town boards available on line that are **routinely** used by staff.
- The Fire Department has placed (along with many other documents) the Town's safety newsletter on line. Previously, MANY paper-based copies of this document were created and distributed Town wide. This had been a very costly document to produce in terms of color inkjet cartridges and paper consumption.
- In the future, Management Services will be looking into records retention issues and how these documents will be used and retained in a paperless format.

These are only a few notable examples and admittedly the Town is at its' infancy in terms of making use of and mastering these wonderful resources. The Town is within a learning curve on how to most efficiently publish and prioritize information in a paperless format. In the long run, with the Board's ongoing guidance, the Town of Carrboro has the technical infrastructure to support and nurture a

paperless strategy. The final result will undeniably be on the shoulders of the Town government staff as a whole and how well the Town staff is able to embrace these concepts.

Other less visible paperless strategies are at work within the organization. The Management Services Department has made simple changes in numerous purchasing and accounting procedures that result in less paper used. For example, the threshold for purchase orders is now $250 versus $50. Thus, departments are only required to submit a check request and an invoice when paying for goods under $250. Currently, a pilot procurement card program is underway where departments may use a procurement card to purchase items. This reduces the number of checks processed by departments. Public Works, in tracking fuel use by department, purchased an upgrade to its TRAK fuel software system, allowing the report to be generated within the computer. They no longer prepare a separate spreadsheet to assess these charges, saving staff time and paper. Numerous departments have reported that they send agendas for advisory boards and staff meetings or reports for neighboring jurisdictions by email. While these examples are not visible by themselves, they do, in aggregate, add to substantial savings in the use of paper.

Finally, the use of list serving software or simply a list server will facilitate the flow of the paperless end product to interested parties. Interested parties may sign up for lists that are of particular interest to them and they will receive, by email, notifications frequently containing web hyperlinks back to the Town's web server where they may find further relevant information.

ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION
The Board is requested to provide staff direction on implementing and prioritizing a paperless strategy for the organization.